

ABSTRACT

5 A method and apparatus for viewing the effect of  
changes to an index for a database table on an  
optimization plan for a database query, such as an SQL  
statement. A virtual table is created which mimics the  
structure of an original table on the database. The  
virtual table is created by copying the original table,  
excluding any data in the original table. Any existing  
10 original indexes associated with original table are  
copied to define a virtual index associated with the  
virtual table. References in the query to the original  
table are replaced with references to the virtual table.  
The database management system then determines a new  
15 optimization plan for the query.